

THE RAPTURE, PART 11

Last week we had an introductory message to this next precursor sign to the rapture that we want to address which is that of an ever-increasing moral breakdown. I have read so many facts and statistics on this that I am mentally exhausted from just having to do the research on a subject like this. It is actually depressing and very difficult to even know where to begin. This precursor sign has to do with the ever increasing propensity of so many people to all kinds of immorality and all kinds of incredibly ungodly type relationships, as well as the culture embracing it all. Just for starters, the United States has the highest abortion rate in the western world and the highest divorce rate in the world. We rightfully recognize and honor the horrendous killing of 3000 individuals on 9/11, but we literally abort that many children every day! Nearly 60% of all Americans believe that the definition of traditional marriage needs to be changed. We have the highest rate of illegal drug use on the planet. One third of all Americans, 110 million people, have a sexually transmitted disease, and we have the highest STD rate in the world. We have the highest teen pregnancy rate in the industrialized world. 30% of all internet traffic now goes to adult websites. It is estimated that 89% of all pornography is produced in the United States. In the United States more than 50% of all couples move in together before they get married. I have so many verified statistics that I became numb to them as I was researching.

Today, and this should be readily obvious to all of us, we are constantly bombarded with sexual imagery from every conceivable angle. Pornography alone has been firmly implanted in the moral fiber of our culture. We have a “cancel culture” that is politically and socially outraged if someone like myself speaks against something like the LGBTQ movement, but they fully embrace sexually explicit material and pornography as a “civil right”. I am personally convinced that the shallow, non-committed individual who listens to a video like this will most likely cut it off before I ever get to the end. It is like they simply do not want to hear what God has to say about this topic. They are satisfied with being tolerant and will see a teaching like this as being intolerant, bigoted, narrow-minded, and racist. This is the cultural environment in which we live.

Now, [Colossians 3:4-7](#) is a very key verse for us related to this end-time precursor sign to the rapture, so please turn there as we read it.

Col 3:4 (NKJV) **When Christ *who is our life* appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.**
⁵ Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶ Because of these things (WHAT THINGS?) the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, ⁷ in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

Obviously v4 is referring to an end time event – most likely the Second Coming rather than the rapture. The key phrase is that “**the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience**”. We have already seen a couple of times in this study on Eschatology that “**the wrath of God**” is not something that is reserved for the believer. That is a great, great comfort to me. That is not to say that the believer will never experience persecution or trials, because they will. However, God’s specific “**wrath**” against us as believers was poured out on Jesus Christ at His crucifixion. God has no intention of punishing any of us twice for our sins. I certainly do not deserve that, but I glory in God’s forgiveness of my sins. He may surely discipline us, and He may surely judge His church, but neither of those is the “**wrath of**

God". The "**wrath of God**" is a term that is reserved specifically for His wrath that is to be poured out on the wicked, and since v4 is referring to an end time event, this wrath is clearly that which occurs directly prior to and at the Second Coming. In fact, v6 communicates this as a very definite "future" event when it says that this wrath "**is coming**". This wrath is future.

Since the resurrection of Jesus Christ, I do not personally believe that this "**wrath**" has yet been unleashed – but it will be according to [Revelation 6-19](#). The "**wrath of God**" being poured on the wicked is inevitable – whether it be at their physical death, during the Tribulation, or at the actual Second Coming. Obviously, there are many lost people who live in the lap of luxury and decadence, but it is only short lived for eventually death catches up with them and at that moment they are seized by the inevitable wrath of God as they are assigned to an eternity of everlasting torment. That is not a very heart-warming reality.

It should be very sobering how far we as a nation have come relative to the issue of immorality. A national moral decline always happens when God is neglected and ignored, and when Jesus Christ is demeaned as being totally irrelevant. Obviously, immorality has always been present in every culture since the beginning of time, so the issue is not so much that we have to deal with immorality, but the simple fact is that we are witnessing an unprecedented rise in immorality. It is a kind of gross, vulgar, repugnant national immorality that most of us as adults have never experienced previously. Unfortunately, many children have simply grown up in this kind of unrestrained moral culture, so it has become very normal and acceptable to them. Trust me, but it is not normal to me, and hopefully not to you. Then to make things worse, history has proven that the inevitable result of the kind of immorality that we as a nation are experiencing will cause any nation to implode and collapse. As the moral fiber of our culture is eroded, the quicker will be our nation's demise because eventually we reach that inevitable point of no return. I believe that we are seeing it happen and unfold in our lifetime. [John 3:19](#) gives us some insight when it says,

Jn 3:19 (NKJV) And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Lost men and women hate the truth. They hate the light simply because the truth of God's Word exposes them and reveals what they are really like. They want to believe that their gross and filthy immorality is justified and that God will not judge them for how they want to live. They had better think again. Jesus declared the following in [John 8:12](#) when He said,

Jn 8:12 (NKJV) Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

This is exactly why men hate Christ and why they despise Christianity. It is because His life and His Word expose them for what they are really like – sinners who are in rebellion against a holy God. His Word exposes them in their sin, and they literally hate Him for doing that. The world is not comfortable in the light. They know, but choose to casually ignore that the truth of God's Word as revealed in Jesus Christ actually condemns them if they remain in their state of hatred for Him and for His Word.

The great tragedy of the modern church age is that the pull of this immoral culture is already so strong in people's lives that many Christians are deeply influenced by the thinking of the secular world such

that they can no longer even tolerate Bible truth. Even large segments of the church are uncomfortable with the “absolutes” of Scripture, so they have casually and systematically redefined truth so that it is relative and flexible to how they want to live, and especially morally.

For instance, in 2015 the Presbyterian Church USA voted to redefine marriage as “*a commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman*”. Sounds nice – right. However, the way that they worded this modification into the church’s constitution allowed for same-sex marriage – with which they are very comfortable. They are mere wordsmiths for sin. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America allows for same-sex marriage and the Episcopal Church allows for same-sex marriage, as well as openly gay clergy – both homosexuals and lesbians. We already have a few liberal Baptist churches which are adopting the same stance so that they can be viewed as being culturally relevant. The new politically correct term is “LGBTQ Affirming”, and it is now being placed on the marquees of many churches across America. Some just have signs that simply say “Affirming”. For a church to recognize same sex marriages, or to accept gross immoral relationships condemned by the Word of God is just evidence that we are probably not that far away from God’s judgment on America, and specifically the church itself. [Revelation 21:8](#) emphatically declares the following,

Rev 21:8 (NKJV) But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

There is absolutely no relief in a verse like this. The Word of God is not trying to fool people, not trying to hide God’s truth, but to the contrary, it is very forthright and absolute about what it says. God is not playing some game with immorality where in the end it will all be okay. That is a cultural position of total insanity. To help overcome the guilt and justify their sexual immorality, they redefine God and redefine His Word. It is really simple. We do not like what you have to say, so we get us another God. [1 Peter 4:17](#) says,

1Pe 4:17 (NKJV) For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

The last part of that verse is clearly talking about lost people. Is there anyone here who thinks that a term like “**the end**” really has no weight or eternal seriousness to it? The word “**end**” is “*telos*” and it simply means the final lot, the final and ultimate state that a person finds themselves in. It is the beginning of a different order of things, life in a completely different dimension. Everyone is eternal. Everyone lives forever. It is just a matter of where. Death is not annihilation and non-existence, but rather it is being placed into another dimension and another location in an unalterable state over which you have no power to change or even affect anything that has happened to you.

I want you to understand and appreciate that there is no middle of the road here – this state called “**the end**”. Either a person is saved, or a person is lost. The very moment anyone dies, they enter into an eternal realm in which they are fully conscious and fully alive. Based on what that individual has done with Jesus Christ in this life, they will either be enjoying a place of indescribable blessing or they will be catching their first taste of torment as they have never imagined - and in either case, their future will be irrevocably fixed. There is no middle ground here – absolutely none. There will be no future reprieve. Either you are saved or you are lost. Either you are committed to Christ or you are not committed to

Christ. Either you are obedient to God or you are disobedient to God. You are either going to die and go to heaven or you are going to die and go to a place of eternal torment and suffering. There is nothing in the middle here.

Now, I am NOT trying to be dramatic here, but this is utterly frightening to me. I am sure that you have heard this statement before or have been asked this question when people say “*Would a loving God really send good people to hell?*” Now, the real answer to that question is that from **our** perspective there may be some “good” people out there, but from **God’s** perspective there are no “good” people. The question is good by whose standard? [Romans 3:11](#) says that “**there is none righteous, no, not one**”. If a person has never been truly saved, their “end” will not be what they expected. What you do with Jesus Christ “today” will determine what He does with you in “the end”. **Whatever you believe about Jesus NOW will ultimately determine how God deals with you after death.** Do not be deceived about that. Our cultures and our ideas are constantly changing and reinventing themselves, but the truth of God on any subject never changes in any way. The lost man’s unfortunate tendency to embrace cultural change often makes him think that he can change the Bible as well – which he cannot. He can certainly change what he wants to believe about the Bible, but he surely cannot change the truth of the Bible.

I bet if I went around the room this morning and asked the question as to whether or not you thought you were going to hell, NO ONE would say “Yes”. In some churches I am sure you might hear “*I certainly hope not*”, or “*I was baptized when I was 8*”, but no one would say. “*Yes, I know that I will go to hell when I die and I can hardly wait to get there.*” I have one person who actually told me that. He has convinced himself that Christians are the ones deceived and that hell with the devil is a great place. I have no idea what he based that on, but he is in for rude awakening. Listen. We as believers do not believe that we will go to hell, but neither do most lost people. They just think they will die, and that only the “bad” people will go there.

Now, I want you to listen very carefully as I get back to immorality as an end-time precursor reality prior to the rapture. What is inevitable is that **ever increasing gross immorality is followed by God’s impending judgment and eventually His “wrath” being poured out on the ungodly.** In my mind, it is inescapable, predictable, and no different than Sodom and Gomorrah. I.e., there is nothing that would cause me personally to think that God is **NOT** going to judge America, or any other country for that matter that is engrossed in immorality. To whom much is given, much is required. I wonder what you think? Do you think that God will just look the other way? Personally, I doubt that is what He does.

Anyone with any level of common sense and discernment, lost or saved, should quickly recognize that America is in a moral free fall, and is plummeting at such a fast rate both morally and spiritually that it seems there is no repentance from it that is even in sight. Certainly, the American church does not appear to be having any kind of meaningful impact on the culture and is becoming the primary target of the “cancel culture” and “hate crimes”. In fact, many segments of the church are already embracing the wave of immorality that is flooding our culture.

So, when we talk about these type of end time events, we must be faithful to clearly communicate to people that there is a way of salvation. Personally, I find the love of God for me as an individual overwhelming. Since I was saved, I have never been the same. It was Christ’s love for me as a worthless

sinner that changed my life forever. Listen to how Paul described this for himself in [2 Corinthians 5:13-14](#),

2Co 5:13 (NKJV) For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; or if we are of sound mind, it is for you. ¹⁴ For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;

The word “**compels**” is the Greek word “*synecho*” and expresses the idea of constraint. I.e., for Paul the love of Christ constrained him so much that he had to preach it and teach it. I want to say this in another way, and probably as much for me as anyone. **The gospel that we preach is NOT a message about hell.** Ultimately, it is a part of the message, but it is not the message. It would be tragic for us to only talk about the love of God and not to mention the awful consequences of rejecting that love. It would be an appalling miscommunication to do so - but hell simply is not our message. The gospel is our message. The saving work of Christ is our message. We have to start with the gospel. It is the very power of God unto salvation. [Romans 1:16](#) says,

Ro 1:16 (NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

We have to believe in the power of the gospel to save. The condemnation and liability that sin imposes on anyone has been dealt with by Christ. [2 Corinthians 5:19](#) reiterates this when it says,

2Co 5:19 (NKJV) that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Rather than my sins being charged to my account, they were placed on Christ’s account and He willingly took my place and was judged in my place. My sin became His sin so that His righteousness could become my righteousness.. [2 Corinthians 5:21](#) says it this way,

2Co 5:21 (NKJV) For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Christ became a righteous offering for my sin. That is good news to say the least. His death became my judgment, and therefore we personally do not have to suffer the condemnation and torment of hell, of “**the end**”. Christ was the One who bore the very wrath of God against sin, and it was the death of Christ that enables us to escape hell. In a way completely unknown to us, Christ experienced the judgment and the wrath that we should have eternally received. So listen very carefully. **If someone never takes the time to fully understand as much as possible about what hell is really like, then for the most part they will never appreciate what Christ did for them.** I am amazed at how trivial the death of Christ seems to so many professing Christians. I can understand how a lost person has no interest in the cross and the death of Christ, but it completely baffles me how some Christians can treat it so nonchalantly. In my mind, they simply have never understood anything about hell and that from which they have been saved.

As we draw closer and closer to the inevitable rapture of the church, the Tribulation, and the Second Coming of Christ, I can only say that the message of the church seems to be getting weaker and weaker. Our responsibility is to speak the gospel, to declare the gospel, and to preach and teach the gospel of Jesus Christ as much as is possible. May God help us to do exactly that.